

Erie County Ethics Board

May Minutes

May 1, 2017 8:00 a.m. 16th Floor Rath Building

MEMBERS:

Steven Schwartz, Chair
Rebecca Town, Secretary
Chris Trapp, Vice-Chair
Miles Gresham
Warren Galloway
Leslie Ortiz-Fogg, Ex-Officio

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

STAFF:

___ Vianne Uthman, Administrative Staff

OTHERS PRESENT:

___ Ross Kostechy, Legislature Office (recording)

1. Meeting call to order at 8:15 a.m.
2. Review and approval of April 6, 2017 Meeting Minutes* (Approved by Trapp Seconded by Galloway):
3. Website Updates / Email Updates (Uthman /Town /Schwartz):
The draft of April's meeting and the agenda for May have not yet been posted but will in the near future.
 - i. Request for opinions/actions:
 - i. Links to the recording are still not live. Uthman will follow up.
 - ii. Complaints regarding Sheriff Howard's attendance at rally in official uniform were reviewed and the Board could not find a violation under the County Code of Ethics. Schwartz drafted a response that was approved, informing complainants and suggesting other entities that may have jurisdiction over the specific allegations.
 - iii. The Board similarly does not have jurisdiction to address a complaint regarding Paladino attendance at rally.
 - iv. Requests for appeal, clarification or guidance by individuals completing Disclosure Forms were received. A letter quoting the statutory language and informing the recipient of the option to file a petition stating why the department head was incorrect and why they believe they should be excluded. Ultimately the departmental Commissioner decides who is required to file. Ortiz-Fogg will follow-up.
 - ii. FOIL Requests: none
 - iii. Other communications: no updates
4. Old Business:
 - i. Morton vs. County of Erie, et al: No update on Federal suit regarding fine imposed for violation of financial disclosure laws
 - ii. Invitation to Chairman Mills to attend Board meeting to provide more information on Poloncarz complaint still stands. He will be given the next two dates and will be placed on the agenda with notice to the Board. (Heath communication 4/7/17)
 - iii. Return of 2016 Financial Disclosure Forms. A number of disclosures have been submitted for review. The deadline is May 15th.
5. New Business (Schwartz):
 - i. Legislation filed 3/21/17 to revise County Code of Ethics will continue to be reviewed.
 - ii. Chairman Schwartz has a draft of the 2016 Annual Report to the Legislature & County Executive. Members of the Board will review and respond with comments before next meeting.
 - iii. Review of 2016 Disclosures will be conducted after the meeting.
6. Motion to adjourn made by Trapp at 9:07a.m.
7. Next meeting scheduled for Monday June 5, 2017 at 8 a.m.